

VZCZCXRO0477
PP RUEHCHI RUEHDT RUEHHH
DE RUEHHM #1090 2691129
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 261129Z SEP 06
FM AMCONSUL HO CHI MINH CITY
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1505
INFO RUEHHI/AMEMBASSY HANOI PRIORITY 1066
RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE
RUEHHM/AMCONSUL HO CHI MINH CITY 1585

UNCLAS HO CHI MINH CITY 001090

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [SOCI](#) [CASC](#) [DO](#) [THANH](#) [CONG](#) [PREL](#) [VM](#)
SUBJECT: MORE DISSIDENT ARRESTS

REF: HCMC 1012; B) HCMC 936 AND 925; C) HCMC 999 AND 998

¶1. (U) Following his expulsion from Vietnam on September 21, American citizen political activist Do Cong Thanh gave an interview on Radio Free Asia in which he gave more details on his detention (ref C). In his interview, Do stated that the only official charge made against him was "propagandizing against Vietnam." Do said that his organization -- the People's Democratic Party of Vietnam (PDP-VN) -- wants to eliminate Article 4 of Vietnam's Constitution, which enshrines Communist Party rule and a single Party state. Do said that the PDP is "totally independent" of other organizations.

¶2. (U) Do repeated that two other PDP members were detained at the same time he was arrested. Le Nguyen Sang, a 48-year-old doctor, and Huynh Nguyen Dao, a 38-year-old graduate of Marxist-Leninist studies. Do also stated that during his incarceration he had been informed by the police that four more PDP members based in the Mekong Delta province of Tien Giang had been arrested. All of these arrestees are Vietnamese citizens. Do has not been in contact with us since his return to the United States.

¶3. (SBU) We have not been able to confirm independently any of the arrests of Vietnamese-national members of the PDP. In some cases, probable phone lines appear cut or go unanswered. In one case -- that of PDP member Le Trung Hieu in the Mekong Delta -- it appeared that a policeman answered the phone claiming to be a "friend" of the activist.

More 8406 Block Arrests

¶4. (U) Separately, contacts in the dissident community confirm Internet reports that police continue their operations against the pro-democracy "8406 Bloc." Over the past month, police have detained three more members of the Bloc, all members of the Bach Dang Giang Foundation (BDGF). (Per ref B, the BDGF was attempting to organize student protests to coincide with the November APEC Leaders' Summit.) Pham Ba Hai, the purported leader of the BDGF, was picked up on September 7 on a visit to the northern province of Thai Binh. Vu Hoang Hai was arrested in his home in HCMC on September 5. BDFG "domestic coordinator" Nguyen Ngoc Quang was detained on September 3 after he and Hai visited political activist and 8406 Block founder Father Nguyen Van Ly in the Hue.

¶5. (SBU) Tran Dinh Nguyen, an 8406 Block member resident in the Central Highlands city of Dalat, was detained on September 4 in the Central Highlands province of Gia Lai after he visited with Mennonite religious leader Nguyen Cong Chinh. (Chinh is affiliated with the controversial Mennonite Pastor Nguyen Hong Quang.) Nguyen was released on September 8 after four days of detention. He then had two more days of "working sessions" with Dalat police. Dissident websites claim Nguyen was arrested because he posted information on religious freedom incidents on

the Internet.

16. (SBU) Comment: Following months of increased dissident activity in the south, the police are having their say. Over the past two months, eight political activists operating in HCMC's consular district have been arrested. These include three of the four known members of the BGDF and six colleagues of Do Cong Thanh. Other political activists face a range of stepped up pressure, including intensified police surveillance, frequent "working sessions," fines, and the threat of arrest.
End Comment.

WINNICK